

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY:IO/HDC:LCAVANAUGH

APPROVED BY:IO/HDC:L CAVANAUGH

ARA:MR. LISTER (PHONE)

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R 101633Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS STATE 200668

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION TO SECSTATE OCT 3, 1973 FROM NASSAU
REPEATED TO YOU:

QUOTE U N C L A S S I F I E D NASSAU 1435

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR CPRS BF

SUBJ: NARCOTICS WRAP-UP

1. ILLICIT DRUG ACTIVITY CONTINUED AT LOW TO MODERATE LEVELS
THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER. THERE WAS ONE SIGNIFICANT CASE IN
WHICH, AFTER CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE BAHAMIAN GOVERN-
MENT AND US COAST GUARD, AN ARREST WAS MADE IN INTERNATIONAL
WATERS OFF THE BAHAMAS.

2. MILLION DOLLAR HAUL

ON SEPTEMBER 19, IN ONE OF THE LARGEST NARCOTICS SURVEILLANCE
OPERATIONS IN US COAST GUARD HISTORY, AN ESTIMATED FOUR MIL-
LION DOLLARS IN MARIJUANA (OVER THREE TONS) WAS SEIZED ON A
FLORIDA-REGISTERED YACHT OFF THE BAHAMAS. THE ENTIRE OPERA-
TION TOOK PLACE WITH THE COOPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS, AND INVOLVED USCG VESSELS, HELI-
COPTERS AND OTHER AIRCRAFT, AS WELL AS A DEA PLANE. THE
YACHT WAS FIRST SPOTTED SEPTEMBER 16 AND REFUSED A BOARDING
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REQUEST FROM A USCG CUTTER. AFTER A CONSIDERABLE CHASE, IT

TOOK REFUGE IN BAHAMIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS WHILE THE USCG MAINTAINED SURVEILLANCE. THE YACHT'S PASSENGERS BEGAN TOS- SING BARRELS OVER THE SIDE AND, WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE BAHAMIAN GOVERNMENT, THESE WERE RECOVERED BY THE COAST GUARD AND FOUND TO CONTAIN MARIJUANA. ADDITIONAL CONTAINERS WERE LATER FOUND ON A NEARBY ISLAND. ON THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 19, THE YACHT LEFT BAHAMIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS AND SURRENDERED HERSELF TO THE COAST GUARD. THE VESSEL AND PASSENGERS WERE TAKEN TO MIAMI FOR TRIAL.

3. ROADBLOCKS STIR CONTROVERSY

BAHAMIAN POLICE HAVE BEGUN SETTING UP SURPRISE ROADBLOCKS TO STOP AND SEARCH CARS FOR DRUGS. THE ROADBLOCKS HAVE BEEN ERECTED WITHOUT WARNING ON ROADS LEADING FROM NASSAU TO THE AIRPORT. BOTH TOURISTS AND RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN KEPT WAITING FOR 30- MINUTE PERIODS WHILE THE SEARCHES ARE CARRIED OUT. THERE HAVE BEEN COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE INVONCENIENCE AND NEWS- PAPER PROTESTS OF A POSSIBLE INFRINGEMENT OF CIVIL LIBERTIES. THE ROADBLOCKS HAVE ALREADY RESULTED IN SOME 12 ARRESTS AND AT LEAST ONE CONVICTIONS.

4. FIVE US CITIZENS WERE ARRESTED FOR POSSESSION OF MARI- JAUNA DURING SEPTEMBER.
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